

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A method of sealing tissue, comprising:
 - providing an electrosurgical energy source connected to a surgical instrument used for endoscopic surgical procedures, said surgical instrument including a shaft having a pair of jaw members attached to a distal end thereof;
 - providing a pair of opposing channels defined about said shaft, said channels extending along an outer periphery of said shaft from a proximal end of said shaft to said distal end of said shaft, said channels each having an electrical conductor disposed therein, each of said electrical conductors having a first end being connected to said electrosurgical energy source and a second end connected to said jaws members;
 - closing the jaw members around tissue so as to provide a gap between the jaw members in the range of about 0.001 inches to about 0.006 inches and a closure pressure of in the range of about 3 kg/cm² to about 16 kg/cm²; and
 - applying electrosurgical energy to the jaws so that energy passes

between the jaw members and through tissue to effect a tissue seal.

2. (Currently amended) A method of sealing tissue, comprising:

providing a surgical instrument for use with endoscopic surgical procedures, said surgical instrument including a shaft having pair of jaws members attached to a distal end thereof, said jaw members adapted to connect to a source of electrosurgical energy;

providing a pair of opposing channels defined about said shaft, said channels extending along an outer periphery of said shaft from a proximal end of said shaft to said distal end of said shaft, said channels each having an electrical conductor disposed therein, each of said electrical conductors having a first end being connected to said electrosurgical energy source and a second end connected to said jaws members;

closing the jaw members around tissue so as to provide a gap between the jaw members in the range of about 0.001 inches to about 0.006 inches and a closure pressure of in the range of about 3 kg/cm² to about 16 kg/cm²; and

applying electrosurgical energy to the jaws so that energy passes between the jaw members and through tissue to effect a tissue seal.

3. (Currently amended) A method of sealing tissue, comprising:

providing an electrosurgical energy source connected to a surgical instrument used for endoscopic surgical procedures, said surgical instrument including a shaft having a pair of jaw members attached to a distal end thereof;

providing a pair of opposing channels defined about said shaft, said channels extending along an outer periphery of said shaft from a proximal end of said shaft to said distal end of said shaft, said channels each having an electrical conductor disposed therein, each of said electrical conductors having a first end being connected to said electrosurgical energy source and a second end connected to said jaws members;

providing a four-bar mechanical linkage system;

closing the jaw members around tissue so as to provide a gap between the jaw members in the range of about 0.001 inches to about 0.006 inches and a closure pressure of in the range of about 3 kg/cm² to about 16 kg/cm², said closure pressure being generated by said four-bar mechanical linkage system; and

applying electrosurgical energy to the jaws so that energy passes between the jaw members and through tissue to effect a tissue seal.